

INFORMATION CONTROL FOR SOCIAL MANIPULATION

The news and entertainment we consume, and thus our thoughts and opinions, are shaped not just by the media and entertainment corporations but by governments, their agencies and the military-industrial complex.

by David B. Deserano, MS
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Email: fortytwoent@yahoo.com

It would not be impossible to prove with sufficient repetition and a psychological understanding of the people concerned that a square is in fact a circle. They are mere words, and words can be moulded until they clothe ideas in disguise.

— Joseph Goebbels

The United States is the most media-saturated country in the world. We are bombarded daily with thousands upon thousands of images and sounds designed to get our attention, entertain and inform us of everything from shoes to food to celebritydom to political ideology. It's been estimated that the average American is exposed to more than 3,000 advertisements every day, but on top of that there are the news programs, sitcoms, films, radio and other forms of media that we *choose* to consume. All of this works to shape our opinions of the world, and a great deal of time, effort and money is spent to guide our opinions down particular avenues. This used to be called *propaganda*.

Today, with the negative, Nazi-esque connotation which comes with that word, euphemisms such as *misinformation*, *disinformation*, *image consulting*, *political consulting*, *news consulting*, *advertising*, *infomercials*, *public relations*, *damage control* and *the art of spin* have taken its place in the English lexicon, all but concealing its true nature and omnipresence. And omnipresent it is. The industries that deal with information control—in both the commercial and governmental sectors—work with hundreds of millions of dollars annually. Uninformed, ignorant masses are far easier to manipulate than educated, thinking masses. We have to ask: Who has the information? How is it being distributed? How is it contextualised?

Corporations and governments have spent many decades and hundreds of billions of dollars researching how best to influence the people. Much of this information is kept secret from the public (in the case of corporate research, it is their private property), and what is known has come from the more recent work done by scholars around the world—work that is dramatically underfunded by comparison. So, the information available to the average citizen—including the aforementioned academic scholars—is radically less than that which is available to the producers of media or information campaigns (i.e., advertising agencies, public relations firms, political consultants, etc.).

However, an important fact that is known is that the human brain processes different mediums in different ways. Written and spoken words are put through a type of decoding process, wherein the brain deciphers the words and the sentence structure in order to interpret properly what it is reading/hearing. In this process, both the conscious and unconscious mind go through an internal debate, comparing what it's interpreting with what it already knows to be true.

With the image, however, the brain instantly processes it as truth, which means information presented in a visual format has a much greater impact on the unconscious. Over long periods of time, recurring imagery has a built-up effect on the viewer, which allows for unconsciously conceived notions of truth to manifest as though from nowhere. Naturally, then, whoever has control over the mediums of communication has a tremendous amount of power over the populations who consume it.

(Note: In no way is this paper intended to convince readers of any particular conspiracy theory but, rather, to present a collection of facts—all of which are readily available to the public—and allow readers to draw their own conclusions.)

[The full article with references is available at <http://www.nexusmagazine.com>. Ed.]

PART I: Media Intents, Capabilities, Practices and Origins

Anyone who has the power to make you believe absurdities has the power to make you commit injustices.

— Voltaire

1) The radio, the computer and the Internet are all products of the military. The radio was invented in the mid-1890s and its first sale was to the British War Office in 1896 during the Boer War, and three years later to the US Navy. During World War I, the United States put all commercial, amateur and military (except for the Army's) radio equipment under the control of the Navy—a monopoly pursued immediately after the war, as well.

The first operational electronic computer, *Colossus*, was built as a part of the ULTRA project for the British Department of Communication in the Foreign Office, to assist in the decoding of intercepted Nazi transmissions. The first electronic digital computer, ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer), came out of a relationship between The Moore School of Electrical Engineering at the University of Pennsylvania and the Ballistics Research Lab operated by the Army Ordnance Department at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Aberdeen, Maryland. It was "designed expressly for the solution of ballistics problems and for the printing of range tables".

The grandparent of the Internet was the ARPAnet, which came about in 1969. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) of the Department of Defense wished to create a communications infrastructure for the US military that could survive a nuclear attack. "Many of the best attributes of the Internet—including its architecture, technology and gestalt—are the children of this military prototype." (*Sussman, 1997, pp. 87, 89, 90; Slater, 1987, pp. 16-17; Stern, 1981, pp. 1, 15; Reid, 1997, p. xx*)

2) At the outset of World War I in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson (1913–1921) had to devise a way to convince the primarily pacifistic American public (still reeling from the effects of the Civil War) to want to send their boys thousands of miles away to fight a war that didn't involve them. President Wilson came up with the Committee of Public Information, also known as the Creel Commission. Made up of cartoonists, writers, editors, publishers and others whose profession was to convey information to the masses (including Edward Bernays, father of the public relations industry, and Walter Lippmann, the dean of American journalists, a major foreign and domestic policy critic and an important theorist of liberal democracy), within a year they were able to turn the American people into a fervent anti-German population.

This exceedingly positive result caught the attention of two groups in particular. One was the intellectual community who saw these new propaganda techniques (and it was openly called *propaganda* at the time, as there wasn't a negative connotation to that word until the Nazis used many of the same techniques years later) as a general means by which they could control the population on a regular basis. The other group comprised business leaders, who saw a new window to increase their sales by turning the American people into a population of consumers.

What was ultimately learned from all this was that in order to adequately persuade a population to do something, whether to go to war or buy a hamburger, one needed to appeal to them on levels of which they are unconscious.

(*Chomsky, 1991, pp. 7-10, 17-18; Chomsky & Barsamian, 2000, pp. 151-152; Boihem & Emmanouilides, 1996*)

5) It's been noted that "violence is to a dictatorship, what propaganda is to a democracy", and the Nazis used both. Joseph Goebbels, appointed Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda on March 14, 1933, combined the press, radio, film, theatre and propaganda into a single, large-scale organisation and considered the media as "a piano...in the hands of the government", on which the government could play. Although monotony may set in if all means reported the same information, he developed a theory that the media should be "uniform in principles" but "polyform in nuances". This is a concept that has carried over to our media today.

Although we have a tremendous amount of magazines and

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newspapers available to us, most of them are from "highly centralized outlets that proffer a remarkably homogenized fare. News services for dailies throughout the entire nation are provided by the Associated Press...the *New York Times* and [the] *Los Angeles Times-Washington Post* wire services, and several foreign wire services like Reuters. The ideological viewpoints of these news conduits are pretty much the same, 'marked by a prefabricated standardization of news which is constricting and frightening'." (*Neale et al., 1992; Reuth, 1993, p. 174; Parenti, 1986, pp. 30-31*)

6) Fear is a powerful means for establishing social control over a population, and the negative effects of media on its consumers are doing just that, for it's been widely established for decades that regular viewers of violent films and/or television programming often look upon the world as being much more frightening, dangerous and violent than those who view the same media in much less quantity or not at all. The same, by the way, is also true of regular viewers of the evening news.

Furthermore, "psychiatrist Robert Coles writes that children in some parts of America are more frightened [about the world] than children in Lebanon or Northern Ireland"; this may very well have to do with the fact that some of the most violent programming on TV are cartoons aimed at very young children. The potential consequences of this are staggering. A generation brought up to fear the world may be willing to do unhealthy things in order to protect themselves from things that aren't there, such as a readiness to sacrifice their basic civil liberties for a false sense of security. (*Jhally & Dinozzi, 1994; Pipher, 1994*)

13) It's very difficult for a human being to kill a member of their own species; they have to be manipulated to do so. It has been estimated that during World War II, when individual riflemen were left to their own devices only 15–20% of them would fire their weapon at an exposed enemy target. This was blamed primarily upon the training they received in which they would practise shooting at a bull's-eye. Of course, bull's-eyes don't appear on the battlefield, and after the war the military switched

to human-shaped targets. By the time of the Vietnam War, 95% of the riflemen fired their weapons when the right opportunity arose. Today, the Marine Corps uses a modified version of the first-person action game *Doom* (known as *Marine Doom*) as a training device, along with the traditional live ammunition range targets as a means of normalising killing amongst their personnel. In fact, this has been so successful that the Marine Corps Combat and Development Command in Quantico, Virginia, has evaluated more than 30 commercially available electronic games for their potential use as training tools.

This brings up a very disturbing question. If the US military has acknowledged for decades the success of using human-like targets to normalise killing, what, then, is the effect of the same or similar games on kids, where the objective is the near-indiscriminate killing of "the enemy" using toy guns? With this in mind, the rise of school shootings should come as no surprise.

(*Jhally & Huntemann, 2000; Naisbitt et al., pp. 76-77*)

15) At the forefront of White House thinking is the global command and direction of the world economy through information control. While World War II was still ongoing, "US leadership recognized the centrality of information control for gaining world advantage. Well before most of the world could do much about it, US groups, private and governmental, were actively promoting information and cultural primacy on all continents." US films and television programs are "the primary fare of national systems in most countries. News programs, especially CNN, offer US perspectives, sometimes the only perspective provided, to world audiences. US recorded music, theme parks and advertising now comprise a major part of the world's cultural environment..."

"What is of special interest here, however, is the skillful combination of information instrumentation with philosophic principle—a mix that fuels the push toward concentrated cultural power. Not the laws of chance but strategic planning, rarely identified as such, underlies this development. It has succeeded well beyond the initial expectations of its formulators."

(*Schiller, 1995, pp. 18-19; Allen, 2000, pp. 87, 89-99*)

18) On average, individuals in industrialised nations spend three hours a day watching television—roughly half their leisure time; only to work and sleep is more time devoted. At this rate, someone who lives to be 75 would spend more than nine years of their life just watching TV. Why do we watch so much? In studies, subjects claimed that television was a means of relaxation, as confirmed by electroencephalograph (EEG) readings of brain waves, skin resistance and heart rates of subjects while watching television. However, even though relaxation is associated with TV by the viewers, research has shown that passivity and a lowered level of alertness also correlate. Furthermore, once the television is turned off, the sense of relaxation dissipates rather quickly, but the passivity and lowered alertness remain for a considerable time. "Within moments of sitting or lying down and pushing the 'power'

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button, viewers report feeling more relaxed. Because the relaxation occurs quickly, people are conditioned to associate viewing with rest and lack of tension. The association is positively reinforced because viewers remain relaxed throughout viewing, and it is negatively reinforced via the stress and dysphoric rumination that occurs once the screen goes blank again..."

Part of the human attraction to television has to do with our biological *orienting response*. "First described by Ivan Pavlov in 1927, the orienting response is our instinctive visual or auditory reaction to any sudden or novel stimulus. It is part of our evolutionary heritage, a built-in sensitivity to movement and potential predatory threats. Typical orienting reactions include dilation of the blood vessels to the brain, slowing of the heart, and constriction of blood vessels to major muscle groups. The brain focuses its attention on gathering more information while the rest of the body quiets..."

In 1986 Byron Reeves of Stanford University, Esther Thorson of the University of Missouri and their colleagues began to study whether the simple formal features of television—cuts, edits, zooms, pans, sudden noises—activate the orienting response, thereby keeping attention on the screen. By watching how brain waves were affected by formal features, the researchers concluded that these stylistic tricks can indeed trigger involuntary responses and 'derive their attentional value through the evolutionary significance of detecting movement... It is

form, not the content, of television that is unique...' Annie Lang's research team at Indiana University has shown that heart rate decreases for four to six seconds after an orienting stimulus. In ads, action sequences and music videos, formal features frequently come at a rate of one per second, thus activating the orienting response continuously."

(*Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Boihem & Emmanouilides*)

22) In August 1999, the US Army signed a five-year, \$45-million deal with the University of Southern California, chosen because of its close proximity to Hollywood, to have the school's movie, special-effects and other technology experts help with troop training, including battle scenarios, virtual-reality combat and large-scale simulations creating settings similar to Operation *Desert Storm*. This partnership is known as the Institute for Creative Technologies. "The digital world, the world of virtual reality...is going to be part of the embrace of this great new cooperative venture," said Jack Valenti of the Motion Picture Association of America. However, according to James Der Derian, Professor of International Relations at Brown University, "What we're witnessing here today is perhaps not only the announcement of a new sort of technological center, but the creation of a *military-industrial-media-entertainment complex*".

(*US Army, 1999; italics mine*)

24) In October 1999, the CIA held a lavish gala film premiere for *In the Company of Spies*, the first spy thriller ever to bear the CIA's stamp of approval. Starring Tom Berenger and Ron Silver,

directed by Tim Matheson (Otter from *Animal House*), written by Roger Towne (who wrote the screenplay for *The Natural*) and produced by David Madden and Robert W. Cort (who is, himself, a former CIA official), it was made directly for Showtime, a subsidiary of AOL Time Warner, the world's largest media corporation... In 2001, three new TV series (*The Agency*, *Alias*, and *24*) and seven films (including *Bad Company*, *The Bourne Identity* and *The Sum of All Fears*) were made with the CIA's approval. (Loeb, 1999; Campbell, 2001, September 6; Patterson, 2001)

25) Hollywood filmmakers and the Pentagon have a long history of cooperation. The Pentagon sees the film industry as an important part of public relations. According to a recently released memo, it said that "military depictions have become more of a 'commercial' for us"—which explains the Air Force's eagerness to be a part of the shortlived 2002 CBS reality series, *American Fighter Pilots*, which followed three men as they trained to fly F-15s; its executive producers were Tony Scott (director of *Top Gun*) and his brother, Ridley Scott (director of *Black Hawk Down*). Due to the enormous expense of military equipment, it makes financial sense for a filmmaker to get military cooperation. However, this often entails the altering of scripts to fit the needs and desires of the Pentagon (i.e., military and government personnel are to be depicted in more positive and heroic ways, American ideologies are reinforced and not criticised, etc.). For example:

- In *GoldenEye* (1995), "the original script had a US Navy admiral betraying state secrets, but this was changed to make the traitor a member of the French Navy".

- Despite having made changes to characters in *Independence Day* (1996), the Department of Defense refused help because "the military appears impotent and/or inept; all advances in stopping aliens are the result of actions by civilians".

- Other films that received assistance from the Pentagon are: *Air Force One* (1997), *A Few Good Men* (1992), *Armageddon* (1998), *The Hunt for Red October* (1990), *Pearl Harbor* (2001), *Patriot Games* (1992), *Windtalkers* (2002), *Hamburger Hill* (1987), *The American President* (1995), *Behind Enemy Lines* (2001), *Apollo 13* (1995), *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997), and *A Time to Kill* (1996).

- Some films that were denied assistance include: *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *Catch-22* (1970), *Dr Strangelove* (1964), *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), *The Last Detail* (1973), *Lone Star* (1996), *Mars Attacks!* (1996), *Platoon* (1986), and *The Thin Red Line* (1998). (Campbell, 2001, August 29; Weiss, 2002)

28) On February 19, 2002, the *New York Times* reported that the Pentagon's Office of Strategic Influence (OSI) was "developing plans to provide news items, possibly even false ones, to foreign media organizations in an effort to influence public sentiment and policy-makers in both friendly and unfriendly countries".

The OSI was created just after 9/11 "to publicize the US government's perspective in Islamic countries and to generate

support for the US's 'war on terror'. This latest announcement raises grave concerns that, far from being an honest effort to explain US policy, the OSI may be a profoundly undemocratic program devoted to spreading disinformation and misleading the public, both at home and abroad... The government is barred by law from propagandizing within the US, but the OSI's new plan will likely lead to disinformation planted in foreign news reports being picked up by US news outlets".

("Media Advisory: Pentagon propaganda plan...", 2002)

PART II: Corporate Media and Content Control

Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one.

— A. J. Liebling

37) Before he retired, AOL Time Warner CEO Gerald Levin told MSNBC that his company's Internet division had already helped terror investigators, "apparently providing access to email traffic".

According to Jeff Chester, Executive Director of the Center for Digital Democracy, "there's an implicit *quid pro quo* here...the industry seems to be saying to the administration, 'we're patriotic, we're supporting the war...now free us from constraints'." Although that may or may not be true, on June 2, 2003, the FCC voted 3–2 to relax the rules on media ownership. (Roberts, 2002; Kirkpatrick, 2003)

40) After World War II, Allied forces restricted media concentration in occupied Germany and Japan "because they noted that such concentration promoted anti-democratic, even fascist, political cultures".

In the 1950s, the majority of the American mass media (i.e., television stations, radio stations, film studios, magazine publishers, newspaper publishers, book publishers, advertising agencies, etc.) were owned by more than 1,500 corporations. By 1981, they were owned by fewer than fifty. Today, that number is six: AOL Time Warner, The Walt Disney Company, Bertelsmann, Viacom, News Corporation and Vivendi Universal—with Sony, Liberty Media Corporation and General Electric close behind.

In our current electoral process, "reaching audiences has become the substitute for what used to be called 'garnering constituencies'. Just as advertisers sell products to audiences, political consultants market candidates to those same audiences. In contemporary media-driven elections, program, advertising and film audiences become targeted markets of voters. In the larger sense, citizens are transmuted into consumers, connecting with a media product instead of a political platform".

(McChesney, 2000, p. 61; Nichols & McChesney, 2000, p. 28; Bagdikian, 2000, pp. 21-22; Andersen, 2000, p. 251; Taylor, 2002)

43) News Corporation, the fifth largest media corporation in the world—owner of 20th Century Fox, Fox Television Broadcasting Corp. (including all subsequent Fox channels such as Fox Sports

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Channel, Fox Movie Channel, etc., as well as F/X and The National Geographic Channel), magazines such as *The Weekly Standard*, *Inside Out* and *TV Guide*, newspapers such as the *New York Post* in the US, 22 papers in Australia and nine in England including the *Times*, the *Sunday Times* and the *Sun*, as well as the publishing houses HarperCollins and Regan Books—is owned by Rupert Murdoch. Murdoch has used his media power to nuzzle up to some of the most influential leaders of recent history, including Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair. Or, rather, they have nuzzled up to him. In the case of Tony Blair, in exchange for the support and endorsement of Blair in Murdoch's publications during his campaign, Blair, once elected, was able to change British policy on media ownership to Murdoch's favour.

In fact, Murdoch himself has been quoted as saying, "When you are the monopoly supplier, you are inclined to dictate". (Williams, 2000; "News Corporation", 2003; Jhally, 1997)

45) During the first Gulf War, each of the big three networks had profound financial ties to the war. ABC was owned by Capitol Cities (which is now owned by The Walt Disney Company), whose chair was on the board of directors of Texaco Oil. CBS, at the time owned by Westinghouse, though now owned by Viacom, also owned the RAND Corporation and the Honeywell Corporation, both of which were and are major defence contractors and stood to make a great deal of money out of the war. NBC was—and still is—"wholly owned" by General Electric, which had a \$2 billion weapons contract with the US military, making both the *Tomahawk* and the staggeringly unsuccessful *Patriot* missiles, and it was estimated they'd made hundreds of millions more with the rebuilding of Kuwait after the war. Also, the Kuwaiti royal family were major GE stockholders. General Electric CEO John Welch reportedly once told NBC President Lawrence Grossman, "Remember, you work for GE". (Naureckas, 1991; Williams, 2000; "Corporate Info", 2003; Jhally, 1997)

47) "The simple fact is that in most traditional newsrooms the culture of journalism is to determine the basic nature of a story before assembling all, or even most of, the facts. Just as many theorists develop a working hypothesis before collecting the data, many journalists are used to formulating the angle, or frame, of a story before they interview anyone, read a document, or collect any other facts. Sometimes they are more apt to follow the adage, 'Never let the facts get in the way of a good story'." Why is this? There are many reasons, but a major one continues to be that "the changing economic structure of the television networks has eroded the[ir] newsroom values... Where once a culture committed to great journalism flourished, a culture dominated by MBAs and financial accountability has taken its place. Accountability to shareholders [to make money] has replaced accountability to democracy and the citizens it serves." (Pavlik, "News framing and new media", 2001, pp. 312-314)

51) Think we have free speech in this country? Not if you're on television. Just ask Bill Maher. Soon after the September 11 attacks, Maher, in response to the labelling of the hijackers as cowards, said on his late night ABC program *Politically Incorrect*: "We have been the cowards lobbing cruise missiles from 2,000 miles away. That's cowardly. Staying in the airplane when it hits the building, say

what you want about it—it's not cowardly." Less than a week later, his show was cancelled.

(Armstrong, 2001, September 20, 27; "Maher tapes final episode...", USA Today, 2002, June 29; Hirszen, 2002, March 15)

52) During a March 10, 2003 concert in London, the Dixie Chicks' lead singer, Natalie Maines, told her audience: "Just so you know, we're ashamed the President of the United States is from Texas!" As a result, there have been many organised boycotts across the nation. Clear Channel, the largest owner of radio stations in the US (more than 1,200), pulled the Dixie Chicks from their stations' play lists. Clear Channel is also involved with organising grassroots demonstrations in favour of the war and against anti-war voices. The company's Vice Chair, Tom Hicks, is a member of the Bush Pioneer Club for elite—and very generous—campaign contributors, and was once the Regent of the University of Texas. During that time, he "was responsible for granting endowment management contracts of the newly created [under legislation signed by then Governor George W. Bush] UT Investment Management Co. (UTIMCO). The contracts were given to firms politically connected to both Hicks and Bush, including the Carlyle Group—a firm which has the first President Bush on the payroll..."

Along with the 1,200+ radio stations, Clear Channel also owns 36 television stations and 41 amphitheatres, and annually puts on more than 26,000 stage shows including concerts, Broadway productions, touring productions, and sports and motor events.

(Ali, 2003; Fitzgerald, 2003; "Corrected", 2003; Nichols & McChesney, 2003; "Radio ga ga", 2003; Clear Channel, 2003)

PART IV: Journalism and the Threat to the First Amendment

Three hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets.

— Napoleon Bonaparte

105) In 1970, Peter Dale Scott, a professor of English at UC Berkeley, published *The War Conspiracy*, a scathing investigation



of the CIA and oil companies and their manipulation of US foreign policy in order to escalate the Vietnam War for their own ends. Before the book could be made public, however, the CIA intervened and successfully stopped its release. (Scott, *The War Conspiracy*, n.d.)

109) Vladimir Pozner is a Parisian-born Soviet commentator and an international television celebrity who was one of the Soviet Union's leading interpreters of *glasnost* and *perestroika* and is currently serving as the President of the Russian Academy of Television.

In his 1990 autobiography, he had this to say about the art of journalism: "...the realities of journalism don't involve just facts, for, if they did, computers would replace journalists. Journalism always involves choices—choices among subjects, treatment, words. As a result, the claim of objective reporting functions simply to camouflage what is in fact a value-laden activity. It is not only the readers who are misled by the claim. The journalists, too, can be blinded by their own cover."

In a March 2003 interview with the Russian newspaper *Pravda*, Pozner asserted that, in his view, current Russian television is more liberal and more free than American TV. Furthermore, he posited that as far as television was concerned, "it is the USA that has the least freedom of speech amid other democratic countries at the moment". (Pozner, 1990, pp. 187-188; "Vladimir Pozner", n.d.; Pozner & Novikova, 2003, March 19)

111) Gary Webb is a highly decorated journalist. In a career that spanned more than 19 years, he was the recipient of more than 30 awards for his journalistic prowess, including the Pulitzer Prize in 1990, the H.L. Mencken Award from the Free Press Association in 1994, and the Media Hero's Award in 1997.

In 1996, he wrote a series of articles, entitled "Dark Alliances", which revealed how a "US-backed terrorist army, the Nicaraguan Contras, had financed their activities by selling crack cocaine in the ghettos of Los Angeles to the city's biggest crack dealer. [It] documented direct contact between drug traffickers bringing drugs into Los Angeles and two Nicaraguan CIA agents who were administering the Contras in Central America. Moreover, it revealed how elements of the US government knew about this drug ring's activities at the time and did little, if anything, to stop it. The evidence included sworn testimony from one of the drug traffickers—a government informant—that a CIA agent specifically instructed them to raise money for the Contras in California." His article was posted on the website of the newspaper he worked for—the *San Jose Mercury News*—and was quickly read by people all over the world, getting as many as 1.3 million hits in a single day.

The fallout from this was immense, with the country's three largest newspapers—the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*—putting out stories on Webb, rather than his article. "Never before had the three biggest papers devoted such energy to kicking the hell out of a story by another newspaper." Why? "Primarily because the series presented dangerous ideas. It suggested that crimes of state had been committed. If the story was true, it meant the federal government bore some responsibility, however indirect, for the flood of crack

that coursed through black neighbourhoods in the 1980s..." (Edwards, 2003; Webb, 2002, pp. 306, 309)

112) In February 2000, the Dutch newspaper *Trouw* and France's *Intelligence* newsletter reported that the US Army's Fourth Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) Group at Fort Bragg, NC, worked in the news division at CNN's Atlanta headquarters during the end of the 1999 Kosovo War.

"In the 1980s, officers from...PSYOPS...staffed the National Security Council's Office of Public Diplomacy (OPD), a shadowy government propaganda agency that planted stories in the US media supporting the Reagan Administration's Central America policies. A senior US official described OPD as a 'vast psychological warfare operation of the kind the military conducts to influence a population in enemy territory' [*Miami Herald*, July 19, 1997]..." ("Action Alert", 2000; Cockburn; "Media Advisory", 2002; Fisk, 2003, February 25)

114) In an impressive collection of news reports, Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) showed that, in 1998, ABC's *World News This Morning*, NBC's *Today*, Associated Press, the *Los Angeles Times*, National Public Radio, CNN, *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and *Newsday* all reported the fact that the UN weapons inspection teams were removed from Iraq by order of the UN. However, four years later, every one of those sources reported that Saddam had forced the inspectors out. Did they forget their own reporting or were they consciously assisting the United States government as out-

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lets of propaganda by effectively re-writing history in a way that aided the Bush Administration's war aims? ("What a difference four years makes...", 2002)

120) In order for reporters to become "embedded", they must sign a contract with the government that explicitly requires them to "follow the direction and orders of the government" and prohibits them from suing for injury or death, even where this "is caused or contributed to" by the military. They are almost completely controlled by the military and "agree to give up most of their autonomy in exchange for access to the fighting on military terms". Since the war began, the British populace in general has become more supportive of the war, and of that, British Minister of Defence Geoff Hoon said that "the imagery they ["embedded" reporters] broadcast is at least partially responsible for the public's change of mood". At the end of March 2003, Hoon stated that "One of the reasons for having journalists ["embedded"] is to prevent precisely the kind of tragedy that occurred to an ITV crew very recently when a...journalist was killed essentially because he was not part of a military organisation". ITN reporter Terry Lloyd and two of his crew (cameraman Fred Nerac and local translator Hussein Othman) were killed by "friendly fire". (Miller, 2003, April 3; "Missing ITN crew...", 2003, March 23)

121) Patrick J. Sloyan, who covered the 1991 Gulf War as a *Newsday* correspondent, recently wrote: "When the air war began

Continued on page 74

Continued from page 16

in January 1991, the media [were] fed carefully selected footage by [General Norman] Schwarzkopf in Saudi Arabia and [General Colin] Powell in Washington, DC. Most of it was downright misleading".

It's happening this time, too. According to Christian Lowe of the military magazine *Army Times*, "embedded" journalists are being "hounded by military public affairs officers who follow their every move and look over their shoulders as they interview aviators, sailors, and maintainers for their stories".

(*Solomon, 2002; Miller, 2003, April 3*)

122) On January 27, 2003, CNN released a document to its entire reporting staff. Entitled "Reminder of Script Approval", it relayed the fact that all stories must be submitted to an anonymous row of script editors in Atlanta who can insist upon changes. It read:

"A script is not approved for air unless it is properly marked approved by an authorized manager and duped [duplicated] to burcopy [bureau copy]... When a script is updated it must be re-approved, preferably

by the originating approving authority."

This means that, although the reporter in Jordan, Baghdad or the West Bank most assuredly understands the background and nuances of his or her story far better than the authorities in Atlanta, the anonymous CNN script editors will decide upon the spin the story should take. In other words, CNN is censoring itself, or is agreeing to be censored.

(*Fisk, 2003, February 25; Goodman & Rendall, 2003*)

123) Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) conducted a quantitative study from January 30, 2003 to February 12, 2003, concerning *ABC World News Tonight*, *CBS Evening News*, *NBC Nightly News* and *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* on PBS. It concluded that of the 393 on-camera sources who appeared in nightly news stories about Iraq, more than two-thirds (267) of the guests were from the US and 75% of those (199) were either current or former government or military officials, with only one expressing scepticism or opposition to the war. "Such a predominance of official sources virtually assures that independent and grassroots perspec-

tives will be underrepresented." In fact, only 20 of the 393 represented the Iraqi government and only three represented anti-war organisations. At a time when 61% of US respondents were telling pollsters that more time was needed for diplomacy and inspections, only 6% of US sources on the four networks were sceptics regarding the need for war, half of them were people on the street, and half of them were unnamed.

(*"In Iraq crisis, networks are megaphones..."*, 2003, March 18)

About the Author:

David B. Deserano is a recent graduate from Portland State University, Oregon, with an MS in Communication Theory. Much of his time has been spent researching and documenting the numerous links between the US government and a supposedly free media. He has turned this article (which originated as his Masters thesis) into an illustrated 'zine. To contact Dave Deserano, email him at fortytwoent@yahoo.com.

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